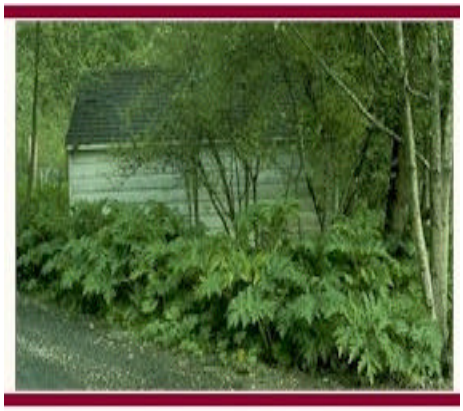
# GIANT HOGWEED

Heracleum mantegazzianum



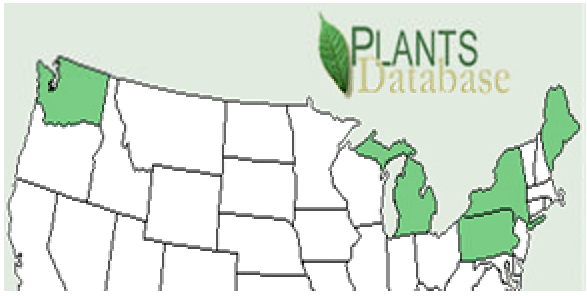
**Description**- a member of the parsley or carrot family, growing 15 to 20 feet in height with stout dark reddish-purple stem and spotted leaf stalks. Hollow stalks and stem produce sturdy bristles. The compound leaves of giant hogweed may expand to five feet in breadth. The inflorescence is a broad flat-topped umbel composed of many small white florets. Each inflorescence may attain a diameter of 2-1/2 feet. The florets produce large elliptic dry fruits marked with brown swollen resin canals up to 1 mm in diameter.

**Hazard**- a public health hazard because of its potential to cuse severe skin irritation. Plant sap produces painful, burning blisters or red blotches within 24 to 48 hours after contact. Purple/brown scars may persist for several years.

**Habitat**- roadsides, rights-of-ways, vacant lots, streams and rivers.

**Distribution:** Maine, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Washington

**Control:** 2, 4-D, TBA, MCPA and dicamba will kill above ground parts but are reportedly not particularly effective on persistent rootstalks. Glyphosate is considered the most effective herbicide and should be used cautiously around desirable species since it is nonselective. Application during bud stage and while the plant is actively growing is recommended by New York Cooperative Extension. In wet areas Rodeo® is the only herbicide permitted for use in Washington.




**Biocontrol Potential**: Cattle and pigs are cited as possible biocontrol agents. Both eat giant hogweed without apparent harm. Trampling also damages the plant.

**References**: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/plants/weeds/aqua012.html
*Giant Hogweed* PA Dept. of Agriculture, USDA Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service